

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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BEAVER SKINS THAT END UP IN CHINA COST SOUTH DAKOTAN A FINE OF \$200

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Eighteen beaver skins from South Dakota that eventually landed in Tientsin, China, cost Orvie L. Thorson of Scenic, S. D., a \$200 fine and a 60-day suspended jail sentence. He recently pleaded guilty in Rapid City, S. D., to taking beaver in violation of a state law.

Investigation of the case began in 1937 when a Federal game-management agent in New York found five beaver skins listed in a fur invoice of a fur-dressing company. The skins had come from California. U. S. Biological Survey agents in that state were asked to investigate further as beavers are protected in many States. They learned that Miss Ruth Crabtree, Glendale, Calif., a former South Dakota resident, had received the pelts from Thorson and had planned to use them in making a fur coat. After abandoning plans for making the coat, Miss Crabtree sold the 18 pelts to a fur importer at Hollywood, Calif., who in turn sent five of them to the New York fur dresser. Later all 18 pelts were sold by the importer to a resident of Tientsin, China. The Federal game-management agent in South Dakota and State Game and Fish Department officials continued the investigation that brought about Thorson's conviction.

W. E. Crouch, in charge of the Survey's law-enforcement activities, announced that in view of the fine already imposed upon Thorson no action is planned against him for alleged violation of the Lacey Act, which makes it a Federal offense to ship interstate beaver hides taken illegally.

"Thorson's punishment", says Mr. Crouch, "shows that State as well as Federal laws that help protect the beaver are not to be trifled with."

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